A MYSTERY OF THE PLAINS.

The Fate of a Wagon-Train of Nitro-Glycerine Revealed.

The following strange story was told a *News* reporter some time since by an old miner just from the hills: "Would you like to hear of a strange thing that happened me last week?" Of course the reply was in the affirmative; so, seating ourselves in the office of the St. James, and tilting our chairs at the proper angle, he said: "Some years ago, while prospecting near Idaho Springs, I came upon a rich lead. The rock, however, was hard, and had to be drilled, and necessarily required two men to do the work. While I was still in a quandary as to whom I could get, a stranger came up to where I was at work and asked me if I knew where he could get employment. I inquired whether he knew anything of mining and could hold and strike a drill.

"He assured me that he had worked in mines in California and Nevada for years, and thought he understood it. Something in the manner and conversation of the man made me take a strong and sudden fancy to him, and I never had cause to be sorry for it. He gave his name as Robert Williams, and had a mild and rather agreeable face, but with a melancholy that seemed to be the result of years of habit. As it is not customary in this country, especially in a mining district, to inquire particularly into a man's antecedents, I at once made a proposition to Williams to join me and work the new prospect on shares. He accepted the offer, and, as I said before, I never had occasion to regret the transaction. Always quiet, sober, and industrious, he became a favorite with everyone, the only remarkable thing about him being he never once in any way referred to his early life. Our mine turned out pretty well, and Williams and I continued partners in working that and other claims ever since until last week, when he died after a very short illness from pneumonia. On the last day, when he felt that he could not live, he called me to his bedside, and told me a wonderful story. He said: 'I was born in Pittsburg, Penn. My father was a large iron manufacturer, and gave me all the benefits of a good education that money could buy. When I became of age I was admitted to the firm. Shortly afterward, owing to fluctuations in the iron market, our firm was forced to suspend. The blow was a particularly severe one to me, as I was engaged to one of the most beautiful as well as wealthy ladies in the Iron city. At this time stories were rife of the immense riches of Colorado, and the Pike's peak and other excitements were drawing to that favored country a large number of the young men of the east. With bright visions of the future and of the fortune that I would make to replace that which I had lost, I started west. Upon arriving at St. Joe I found a number of trains fitting out for the promised land. While seeking to make some arrangements to cross the plains, I was accosted one day by a man who asked me if I was going to Colorado. Upon being told that that was my intention, he said: "I am about sending a wagon loaded with nitro-glycerine or blasting oil, as it is called, to the Colorado mines, and as the trip is attended with some danger I find it difficult to get anyone to take the risk. 'I will pay well for the service, and all expenses besides." Not knowing or realizing the danger, I eagerly seized the opportunity. Joining a party of emigrants who were about to cross the plains, without informing them of the dangerous character of the cargo contained in our wagon, I started one morning together with another man who was employed with me. When we camped for the night we always drew our wagon a little to one side, took our horses out and slept at some distance away. Toward the close of an afternoon in September, 1860, when near McCandless' ranch, on the Little Blue, the skies became dark, a thunder storm arose, and as fate would have it a bolt of lightning struck our wagon, explod contents, which consisted of 3,50 nds of the dangerous substance. ng everyone of the small party, her with all of the horses and cat and reducing to fragments every agon in the train. By a miracle I was riding considerably in advance at the time, seeking to get a shot at some antelope which were grazing in the distance. I became aware of a report louder and more distinct than thunder, and, turning on my horse, saw a dense cloud of smoke where the train should have been, but could not discover its whereabouts. Riding back, I beheld a horrible sight. Bodies of men without legs or arms lay scattered about, and mingled in the confusion of fragments of wagons and their freight were the still quivering carcasses of cattle and horses. You can judge of my horror at the spectacle. I was the only living survivor of the party. Almost bereft of my senses I rode on, and was seized with a new terror. What account could I give of the party or how explain their mysterious disappearance? Then I came to a resolution that was both cowardly and inhumane.

"'I would avoid going to the point of destination of the train and would conceal the facts of its fate in the fear that I might be accused of making away with it. Instead of stopping at the mining camps near Pike's peak, I made a detour around them, fearing to meet anyone who would question me, and went to California. Once in a great while I would see a newspaper in which the mysterious disappearance of the wagon train and those composing it was commented on, everyone believing they had been massacred by Indians. This secret I have kept locked in my breast all these long years, and it has tortured me at times almost beyond endurance.' At this point of his story Williams became so weak that he could not continue, and shortly after breathed his last."—*Denver News.*

A FAMOUS POKER GAME.

The Story of How William M. Scott Won $150,000 Recalled by His Death.

The name of William M. Scott, who died at Toronto recently, was heralded from one end of the continent to the other about two years ago, when he won the sum of $150,000 in a single game of poker. Scott was a native of Newburg, New York, where he lived when he played his famous game. The players in the game were three well-known citizens of that town, one of whom, the victim, had just become heir to half a million. This was a man named Weed. Scott also had money, and was surrounded by wealthy friends. The third member of the party was a former Sunday school teacher, a dentist named Dr. Montreville M. Hedges. It was shown afterward that the poker pot was adroitly run up to $150,000 on bets of at least $5,000 each. The dealer was Dr. Hedges, the shrewdest player of the three. As he deftly dropped the last card on the little round table he called out to know what the other players wanted. Scott said he only wanted one card. Of course the question arose, Was he drawing to fill a straight or a flush? Weed applied to the dealer for two cards, and the question to be decided in his case by the others was whether he was drawing to get four of a kind or to fill a full hand, a straight, or a flush. Hedges rested on his oars. He had enough, which was of course interpreted to mean that it was anything from a straight or a full hand up to a straight flush. The drawing over, the faces of the three brightened up, and it is safe to say that never before had three lonely men in a little game held three such hands of cards. When the betting got up to $6,000 or $8,000,

WEED WANTED TO STOP,

"because," as he said, 'there is not one of us that will pay if we lose such an amount." It was not stopped, however. After a little Hedges, who had stood pat with his hand and engaged in the betting as it went around until the pot was pushed up to $150,000, called Scott. Then came the lay down, and afterward Hedges' memorable words to Weed. "This is dreadful, ain't it?" Of course, the simple-minded Weed was taken in. He had received a fine hand that would have nerved even the most timid gambler up to a strong betting point. It was four of a kind, and they were aces at that. In any ordinary game a bold better would have done as Weed did, go to the bitter end. Scott's one draw card was the corn breaker. Did it fill a full hand or a straight? was the question that ran through Weed's mind continuously, while the chips, representing thousands of dollars, were being thrown into the pot. "Of course, if it's either, my four aces will beat him," he argued, "while it isn't possible that Hedges drew better than four aces in the deal."

When the end came Weed was struck almost dumb. His four aces were worthless; Scott had drawn in the one card he took the right color and the proper number of spots to make his hand a straight flush, the only thing that would down four aces. Weed attempted to compromise by paying $2,600. He then thought the game had been honestly conducted. But Scott was obdurate and would not settle. He not only wanted the whole amount, but he wanted it then and there, or at least something in settlement that would

BIND WEED AND HIS FORTUNE

to the payment of the debt. If he didn't get it he said he would publish Weed all over the town, where his family stood high in society. This was more than Weed could stand, and at the same time, it is said, there were other strings that were pulled to bring him to terms. Hedges told Scott to retire a minute, and he went out. Then Hedges approached Weed with smiles and offered his assistance. Of course, Hedges was also a loser of $150,000 to Scott, which made the latter's winnings on the game $300,000, but as it could paid, probably no notice was ta of such a trifling thing.

"This is dreadful, ain't it?" said Hedges and added: "There is only one way we can get that money back." Then he proposed to Weed to mark the cards and go at it again and clean Scott out. He took his knife and marked a card with it. "Now," said he, "we can tell in this way which are aces and which are kings, and we'll get square with him that way."

"No," said Weed, who still innocently believed he had been treated fairly and honestly; "no, if I can't p'ay a square game, I won't play at all." The Doctor was now at his wits' end, and the victim of the plot walked out. At the bottom of the steps which led to the street he met Scott, who was still stubborn. His pleading with Scott was unavailing. Weed said to him that he'd always been his friend, and he didn't think it square to exact all of the $150,000 from him. They parted that night with no understanding about the payment of the money.

The next morning Weed met Hedges and Scott in the Hedges laboratory, where the game had been played. Scott still demanded payment of the full amount owed. Weed did not know what to do.

HE DARED NOT SEEK ADVICE

for fear of publicity, and the only way he could see out of the matter was to foot the bill and to let it be the last. Hedges stood ready to give his note in payment of his $150,000 loss. "And why shou'dn't I?" mused Weed. "Probably Hedges will never pay his note, but that is no reason why I shouldn't act the part of an honorable player. Yes, that is best, and I'll do it." So Weed and Hedges both paid their debt of honor with notes.

In a few days a compromise was effected, and Scott let up on each to the amount of $30,000, he agreeing to accept $120,000 from each in payment of the debt. This Weed assented to, as did Dr. Hedges, who gave Scott his note for the full amount, and perhaps it is now among the dead man's effects. Weed paid $20,000 in cash and gave notes for the balance, which was paid with the exception of $15,000, which he refused to pay by the advice of a friend named Moore. The case finally got into the courts and Weed got some of the money.

But the poker game was a small one in comparison with the game that followed. It was a game of faro. Weed was again the loser to the enormous amount of $450,000. The game was played between Scott and Weed for the purpose of giving the latter a chance to win back his $150,000. If Weed won, it was to offset the claim against him and the two were to call it square. Weed jumped at the opportunity. The game was played in the dental laboratory, and the betting ran up very fast, until it stood $450,000 in favor of Scott. Of course, the money was never paid, but it was after this that the trouble over the poker debt got into the courts.

Scott died here at the house of his sister, and his remains were taken to Newburg for interment. He was only 32 or 33 years old.—*N. Y. Sun.*

The Depopulated High

There are few Highland gl... that do not contain traces of the banished population. In Lochaber, along the shores of Loch Arkaig, the home of the clan Cameron, the remains of what were once extensive townships may yet be seen. The celebrated Glencoe formerly teemed with a hardy population. Famous Glengarry is a sheep walk, and the powerful clan Macdonnell are now in Canada. Round Fort Augustus and far into the country of the clan Fraser is naught but desolation. In hundreds of straths in Ross-shire the wild heather has not even yet obliterated the green pastures, and the cultivated fields that once belonged to the MacKenzies and Munroes, and from whence the different battalions of the gallant Ross-shire buffs marched to conquer at Maidra, at Seringapatam, at Assaye, and Argaum. So late as 1849, when the present prime minister had already obtained political eminence, Hugh Miller attempted, but fruitlessly, to draw the attention of the British public to the work of destruction that was going on. He eloquently proclaimed that "while the law is banishing its tens for terms of seven and fourteen years, the penalty of deep-dyed crimes, irresponsible and infatuated power is banishing its thousands for life for no crime whatever." A large number of the dispossessed tenantry were sent to America; the remainder settled on the seashore, where they were cramped into small holdings, and have since lived. The tourist steaming along the wild coast of the western Highlands and islands may see perched on every cliff, in the most exposed situations and subject to the fury of Atlantic gales, the wretched hamlets that now contain the remnants of the Highland clans. Probably he will wonder how a population can at all manage to exist under such conditions. But there they are, elbowed to the very verge of their country. For large tracts of that country the proprietors even now can show no scrap of document, their claim to possess resting solely on the fact that it has never been contested. Created and looked upon, like the foxes, as mere vermin that interfere with sport, discouraged and thwarted in every direction, these people, notwithstanding their poverty and the hardships of their lot, have maintained unimpaired the noblest attributes of their race. Crime of any kind is almost unknown among them. Their moral standard is the highest in Britain, contrasting in that respect most remarkably with their lowland neighbors; and not a few of the leading British statesmen, lawyers, divines, and soldiers of the past eighty years first saw the light in these crofters' huts. Far behind the strip of inhabited littoral stretch the Blue mountains, the snug and often fertile glens from whence the clans were banished, now turned into silent wilderness, inhabited only by sheep and deer and an occasional shepherd or keeper. There are the vast tracts, rented by the American, Mr. Winans, as a hunting ground, to be visited by that alien for two or three months, and abandoned to solitude for the remainder of the year, where not even a native of the soil may plant his foot.—*The Nineteenth Century.*

A Boy's Ambitio

Nearly everybody who is now a man, says the *Through Mail*, was once a boy. All these grown-up boys remember how they felt the first time they saw a brass band. They felt that the president of the United States was not to be compared to the editor of the bass drum, and that the drum-major was at least six inches above George Washington in the temple of fame. Oh! how they did yearn to belong to a brass band, until a circus came along, and then they longed to be the fearless equestrian or the man in the lion's cage. Congress had no charms for most of its present members when they were boys. To be a bareback rider or drum-major was infinitely better than to be a member of congress in their youthful eyes.

Then came a time when their hearts were set on becoming a brakeman on a railway train, and when the vision of a promotion to the conductorship of a train floated across their dreamy optics they were in the fifth heaven of delight. Time wore on, only to rub the glitter of the railway service off, and supply its place with grand aspirations for the position of umpire of a base-ball game, which was rapidly succeeded by an inordinate ambition to be the victor of a prize-ring. After being knocked out in one round by nearly every boy in the community, ambition again underwent a metamorphosis, and the one thing of all things desired was to be the reigning monarch of a barber-shop, or the untrammeled commander of a volunteer fire brigade.

In d e time all the tinsel of these high callings was but dross to them, and to die on the battle-field, breathing some patriotic sentiment as the sands of life ran away, was the one hig aim of existence. After one encampment with the home militia, with beans and hard-tack for menu, and a finger accidentally shot off for fun, no further anxiety to spill blood by the gallon for their country was manifested, and they longed for more agreeable pursuits incident to the tranquil surroundings of peace.

At about this point their desires took a different turn. Their hearts glowed with a nobler impulse, and there was a trifle more determination to do in their composition. One determined to teach school, and did so. To be sure he was surprised that life was not one continual round of uninterrupted joy in his new calling, but he worries along and the next spring enters a law office and becomes a disciple of Blackstone. The next autumn he reverts to school-teaching, and school-teaching is sandwiched into his life in various ways and at numerous periods afterwards, until he becomes an editor, and the prize-ring experiences of his youth are repeated again. Some years later he is elected to congress, and then all the old ambitions are forgotten, and give place to designs on the senate. Only a few of them ever get there, and they at once feel the humming of the presidential bee in their bonnets, and eventually become candidates before the national conventions of the great parties, and all but two get—left; and when the election is over one of these two is also left.

Missing Link.

"Krao," the so-called "missing link" whose history and appearance have considerably exrocised scientists and amused the curious in Europe, arrived in Philadelphia yesterday morning in charge of George Shelley, who accompanied Carl Bock, the traveler, to Siam three years ago, when the child was captured. Mr. Shelley sat last night in an upper room at the Bingham House with "Krao" beside him, and discoursed learnedly and voluminously on his little charge. The child, who is believed to be between 8 and 9 years of age, was neatly dressed in a terra-cotta gown, red stockings and buttoned kid shoes. Heavy silver bracelets adorned her hairy arms and a cord, interwoven with gold thread, encircled her waist. Though the nose is flat, and the face and forehead are covered with black hair of varying length and closeness, the child is saved from repulsiveness by her remarkably large, dark, gentle, and intelligent eyes, and her general expression of sense and good nature.

"Krao," says Mr. Shelley, was captured with her parents in January, 1881, in the wilds of the Laso country, in Northern Siam. All of the tribe that have been seen are completely covered with hair. In their natural state they live in trees, are destitute of clothing, and almost without language. Their food is fruits, fish and nuts. They have few implements, and do not possess the knowledge of fire. The name "Krao" is simply the Siamese for ape.

Mr. Shelley, who is a believer in the Darwinian theory, while not pretending that Krao and her tribe supply the only link between man and the higher apes, holds to the idea that these curious people are allied to the chimpanzee in many physical points, with much resemblance to civilized man in intellect. He instances as Krao's ape-like characteristics the following facts: She has thirteen dorsal vertebræ and thirteen pairs of ribs, instead of twelve, as in man. She has pouches in the mouth where she still stores nuts and sweetmeats. Her cranial measurements correspond with those of the higher apes. Her ears and nose are without cartilage. Her fingers are abnormally flexible. The hair on her body grows in directions that characterize the Siamese hirsute growth.

Krao, since her captivity, has learned to read, write and speak English, and has also acquired some knowledge of German. From a wild, untaught little savage, she has developed into a docile, affectionate, and remarkably intelligent child. She still has recollections of her wild life in Siam. The child last evening wrote her name in full, Krao Farini, with a pencil, in a large, round, copy-book hand, picked up a handkerchief with her toes, and good-naturedly opened her mouth to show where she had stored away nuts in her curious, ape-like pouches.—*Philadelphia Press*

Solomon in the Shade.

When Solomon was asked to decide which of two women a child belonged to he called for his sword and proposed to cut the child in two and give a half to each; the real mother went into hysterics, and Solomon decided in her favor. But at the mixed court, a few mornings ago, an actual division was made, and Solomon's judgment was put in the shade. The chattel in dispute was a black dog, with his tail clipped bare except at the extremity, which retained some long hair. The dog was quite unconcerned, and went snuffling around the arena and under the court table at the magistrate's feet, or wherever his tether would allow him to extend his explorations. The claimants for the dog were a butcher and a washerman. The butcher's assistant held a string, with the dog at the end of it. The washerman held a basket in his hand containing hair which he had clipped from the dog's tail, and which he produced in proof of ownership. Mr. Howes, inspector of markets, stated that he had known the butcher for many years, and that he had seen the dog at his place; and that he believed the dog belonged to the butcher. It was also stated by the police that an experiment had been tried at Hongkow police station; the washerman called on the dog but it would not follow him; but when the butcher called, the dog heard his master's voice and knew the sound thereof. As a last resort to prove that the dog loved him and belonged to him, the washerman pulled off his jacket and showed a plaster stuck between his shoulder blades, saying that the dog had bit him there. The magistrate decided in favor of the washerman so far that he was allowed to keep the basketful of hair, and the butcher was allowed to take the rest of the dog.—*Shanghai Celestial Empire.*

There are queer superstitions about the moon among all peoples. The Hurons call it the creator of the earth and the grandmother of the sun. The Chiquitoes call the moon their mother, and the Navajos make it a rider on a mule. The Botucndos of Brazil ascribe most of the phenomena of nature to the moon; in which they are like the superstitious women of civilized Europe and America who wait for the increase of the moon to change their dwelling, to cut their hair, to be married and to baptize their children. A belief existed among the ancient Mexicans and Peruvians, the Natchez of the Mississippi and the Appalachians of Florida, that the sun was the radiant abode of dead chiefs and braves. To the Esquimaux belong the honor of having discovered that the moon was the paradise for the good, while the wicked were consigned to a hole in the earth.

Dissolution Notice!

The co-partnership heretofore existing between M. C. Dawes, L. A. Hamblin and E. M. Miller, under the name, firm and style of Dawes, Hamblin & Miller, is this day dissolved by mutual consent, Mr. Dawes retiring, having sold his interest to L. A. Hamblin and E. M. Miller, who, assume the business and all liabilities of the late firm, under the name, firm and style of Hamblin, Miller & Co.

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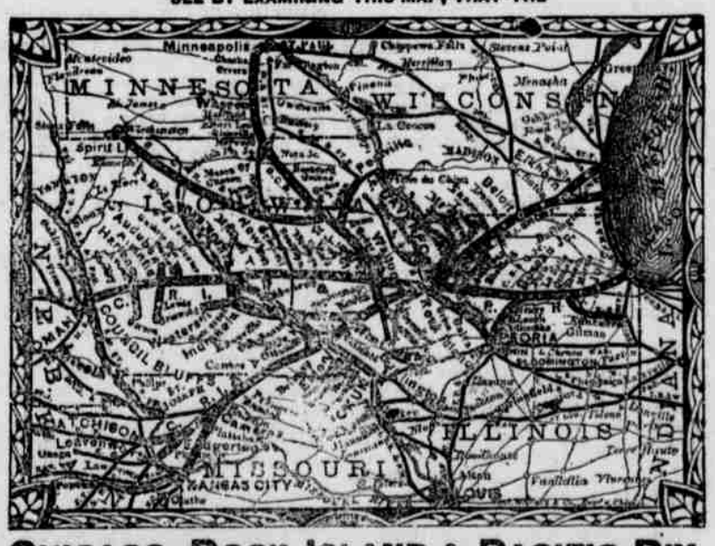

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